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# Mindfulness and the experience of time

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**Abstract**

Personal reports from experienced meditators exist on how subjective time slows down in meditation practice as well as in everyday life. However, hardly any empirical work exists regarding this exceptional experience. In discussing cognitive and neural models of time perception, I want to show how the subjective passage of time and the perception of duration are modified by functional states of mindfulness, i.e., by attention regulation, body awareness, and emotion regulation. Results of two empirical studies will be presented: (1) in a cross-sectional study with students, we investigated how dispositional mindfulness is related to the experience of time. Being more mindful in daily life was related to less impulsiveness, better emotional handling of the past, and a more pronounced future perspective. Mindfulness was also related to more accurate timing in the milliseconds and multiple-seconds range but not to attentional control. (2) In a further cross-sectional study, we investigated whether experienced mindfulness meditation practitioners showed different time perception than matched controls. Overall, the reported findings suggest a close association between mindfulness, the temporal organization of behavior, i.e. more pronounced freedom from time constraints, and the perception of time.

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